# NATURAL NEWS

The Field Museum
Exploring
The Earth And Its
People

WEEKLY NEWSLETTER
March 6, 1998


## EDUCATION DEPARTMENT
**Public Program Planning Schedule**

*March 12, from 9 a.m. - 10:30 a.m.*
*Lecture Hall II*

Staff and volunteers from all departments are encouraged to attend, to contribute their ideas and knowledge of the Museum collections, exhibits, etc.

All proposals will be considered, then reviewed and developed by members of the Education Department staff.

Our first program idea brainstorming session will include ideas for fall and winter programs, 1998-99 (September - February).

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## EXHIBITS

On Monday, March 9, **Peter Stevenson, Jason Grandt**, and **Kent Peaslee** (Exhibits) will depart Chicago for Orlando, Florida, where they will install furniture, cabinets and exhibitry in the Dinoland/Field Museum Fossil Preparation Lab. This lab will serve as a companion site to The McDonald's Fossil Preparation Laboratory, where the bones of "Who? the T. rex" will be prepared. Let's hope they have good weather.

The *Natural News* is printed on recycled paper and can be recycled again.

## ACADEMIC AFFAIRS

*FIELD MUSEUM STUDENTS LEAD INTEGRATIVE BIOLOGY MEETINGS*

The annual meeting of the Society for Integrative and Comparative Biology (SICB), held in Boston this winter, was attended by multitudes of biologists from the Museum and the University of Chicago. Most of the Chicago representation at these prominent meetings was performed by students associated with the Museum's Zoology Department, and the Chicago academic community gained in reputation as a result! The Biomechanics Laboratory (Division of Fishes) was present en masse, with contributed papers on fish locomotion given by **Lisa Rosenberger, Jeff Walker, Melina Hale**, and **Brad Wright**. Brad won the best student paper award in Vertebrate Morphology (see story on next page). Congratulations Brad! Other biomechanics and comparative morphology papers were presented by **Matt Carrano** (Mammals/Geology), **Rick Blob** (Geology), **Laura Panko** (Mammals), **Nora Espinoza** (Amphibians and Reptiles), and **Paul Magwene** (Amphibians and Reptiles). **Jake Socha** (Biomechanics) and **Dan Dudek** (Fishes undergraduate) were there for the first time, making friends.

Phylogenetic systematics sessions were also an active area of Field Museum participation. **Mark Westneat** (Fishes) and

**Terry Grande** (Geology) presented phylogenetic analyses of fishes, while **Mike Alfaro** (Fishes /Biochemistry) presented his work on water snake phylogeny and **Amy Driskell** (Birds/ Biochemistry) discussed her analyses of honeycreeper evolution.

*BRAD WRIGHT WINS*
*D. DWIGHT DAVIS AWARD*

Each year the Division of Vertebrate Morphology of the Society of Integrative and Comparative Biology presents the D. Dwight Davis Award to the student who gives the best scientific presentation in the fields of comparative morphology, functional morphology, or integrative vertebrate biology. This year, the award will be presented to **Brad Wright,** a graduate student at the University of Chicago who is a resident of the Biomechanics Laboratory (Fishes) here at the Field Museum. Brad's research is an analysis of the way that triggerfishes and filefishes swim. Triggerfishes and filefishes swim in an unusual way using dorsal (upper) and anal (lower) - almost never wagging their tails like a typical fish. Furthermore, they perform this feat of locomotor prowess in a variety of strange and wonderful ways. As a result, Brad has found a rich subject for study that involves comparative anatomy, studies of swimming behavior, the evolution of the behavior across several families of fishes, and the arcane field of computational fluid dynamics. In Brad's presentation, entitled "Oscillation Versus Undulation in Balistiform Locomotion" he integrated behavior, morphology, and mathematical analyses of models in fluid dynamics to revise our understanding of the way that these fishes generate forward thrust. Congratulations Brad, on winning the award!

This award being presented to a Field Museum student is particularly noteworthy because D. Dwight Davis, for whom the award is named, was a prominent Field Museum curator from 1932-1965. Dwight Davis was first appointed as an assistant in the Division of Osteology at the Field Museum in 1930, in 1932 was appointed as a curator of Osteology, and in 1941 he became the Curator of Anatomy. He propelled the Field Museum Anatomy Division to national prominence during the 1950s and '60s, publishing over fifty scientific papers and numerous popular articles. His main area of interest was comparative anatomy of mammals, but he also worked on other vertebrate groups, including a single paper on a fish (his first, in 1932). Dwight Davis is still famous for his monograph on comparative anatomy of the giant panda, in which he showed its close relationship to other bears. This work stands as an example of scholarship and intellectual thought in evolutionary morphology and as a standard of beauty in the illustration of comparative anatomy. Each year the Society of Integrative and Comparative Biology recognizes this part of our history by presenting the Davis Award to a promising student. Thanks Brad, for bringing it home!

*REESE TO STUDY IN TURKEY*

Adjunct Curator **David S. Reese** (Anthropology) has been awarded a grant from the Institute for Aegean Prehistory in New York to study faunal remains in Aegean Turkey, including material from recent American/German excavations at Troy.

The *Natural News* is edited by **Carolyn Klyce** in the President's Office. The deadline for all submissions (in WordPerfect on floppy disk or via email to klyce@fmnh.org) is Tuesday at noon.

**Mayor's Office of Special Events**
**1998 Festival Dates**

| | |
|---|---|
| Chicago Neighborhood Festivals | May 1 - October 4 |
| Chicago Bike Week | May 16 - 24 |
| Chicago Blues Festival | June 4 - 7 |
| Chicago Gospel Festival | June 12 - 14 |
| Taste of Chicago | June 25 - July 5 |
| Chicago Country Music Festival | June 26 - 27 |
| Race to Taste | June 28 |
| Mayor's Cup Youth Soccer Fest | July 18 - 19 |
| Venetian Night | July 25 |
| Chicago Air & Water Show | August 22-23 |
| Viva! Chicago | August 29-30 |
| Chicago Jazz Festival | September 3-6 |
| Celtic Fest Chicago | September 19-20 |

For more information, contact the Mayor's Office of Special Events at 312/744-3370.

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## *About town*

Chicago Humanities Festival IX Preview

**Gore Vidal**
will read from and discuss his new novel
*The Smithsonian Institution*

Friday, March 13, 1998 at 6 p.m.
Thorne Auditorium, Northwestern University School of Law
375 East Chicago Avenue

Tickets $5/ Reservations call 312/422-5350 (x230)

# WELCOME!

*Staff who began their employment in February*

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| Elisa Aguilar | Anthropology | Exhibit Projects Assistant |
| Fletcher Allison | Security | Security Officer I |
| Joanne Avery | Geology | Fossil Preparator |
| David Beamer | Zoology/Reptiles | Collection Assistant |
| April Blazevic | Exhibits | Artifact Handler |
| Christopher Brochu | Geology | Post-Doc Research Scientist |
| Sara Foster | Botany | Collection Assistant/Mycology |
| Christina Halperin | Anthropology | Data Entry Assistant |
| Kristofer Jadd | ECP | Chicago Wilderness Assistant |
| Koyo Konishi | Exhibits | Exhibit Preparator |
| Jane Long | ECP | Mighty Acorns Program Coord. |
| Rebecca Merlo | Anthropology | Data Entry Assistant |
| Maria Pozos | Visitor Services | Visitor Services Representative |
| Roger Reichard | FP&O | Engineering Assistant |
| Ken Rose | ECP | Biodiversity Explorers Project Dir. |
| Mark Schmeltzer | Development | Campaign Writer |
| Bruce Schumacher | Geology | Fossil Preparator |
| Sheryl Sokoloski | Zoology/Inverts. | Technical Assistant |
| Carrie Woods | Visitor Services | Visitor Services Representative |

# WELCOME BACK!

*Staff who were rehired during February*

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| Thomas Anton | Zoology/Reptiles | Collection Assistant |
| Rodger Patience | Development | Coordinator, Development Services |

# CONGRATULATIONS!

*Staff who were promoted or changed positions in February*

| | From | To |
|---|---|---|
| Michele Eck | Collection Assistant/Mycology | Collection Assistant/Botany |
| Paul Brinkman | Collections Mngmt Assistant | Fossil Preparator |
| Judy Burns | Senior Accountant | Audit/Accounting Administrator |
| Laura Dini | Admin. Assistant/ECP | Admin. Assistant/Public Relations |

# GOODBYE AND BEST WISHES!

*Staff who ended employment in February*

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| Richard Bermingham | Vending | Vending Assistant |
| Jennifer Crodian | Botany | Research Assistant/Micro Biologist |
| 20 yrs.-Norman Hammond | Security | Security Officer III |
| George Murray | Botany | Collections Assistant |
| Brian Pearson | Visitor Services | Visitor Services Representative |

## *Congratulations!* March 1998 Employee Anniversaries

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|---|---|---|
| John Phelps, Jr. | Zoology/Mammals | 10 years |
| Peter Laraba | Education | 10 years |
| George Chavez | Exhibits | 10 years |

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## COMING SOON -- NEW CARD ACCESS/ID CARD SYSTEM

Work is currently underway on the installation of a new card access system to replace our current ID badge/card access system. Unlike the current system, our new badges will feature color photos and color-coded IDs to indicate access levels. Additionally, instead of a bar-code card reader where you have to "swipe" the card through the reader, the new system uses Proximity readers, which allow the cardholder to merely hold the card in front of the reader to access a door. We will begin taking pictures for the new system in mid-March. Once all pictures have been taken and cards produced, we will simultaneously replace the readers and begin issuing the new cards. All departments will be contacted to set up appointments for new photos within the next two weeks. In this first phase of the system replacement, only the id/bar-code readers will be replaced. Questions? Call **Ron Cundiff** (Security).

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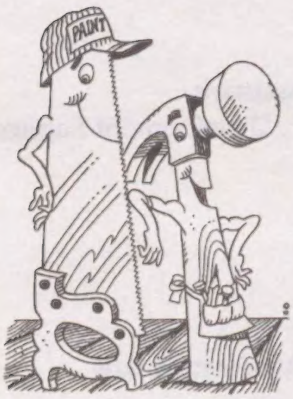
## CONSTRUCTION SAFETY ALERT




The Safety Committee has been advised by the construction crew foreman of the working the new Museum Store project that, despite construction tape around the area -- and the installation of a lock on a temporary door -- staff continue to try to access Stairwell 6 from the first floor. A temporary lock was even forced by someone to get through the construction door blocking the stairwell. Please do not use this stairwell to exit on the first floor, or walk through the construction area to access the stairwell. There are numerous safety hazards in the area, which could result in injury. Questions? Call **Ron Cundiff**

## CONSTRUCTION UPDATE

The demolition of the **washroom** (ground floor, McDonald's) and the renovation is on schedule.

The demolition in the new **Store** space is complete. A barrier is being constructed around the construction space. In about two weeks there will be an overnight shut-down of electricity. The shut-down date will be scheduled around events. Notification of the exact date will be given.

Bids for the **south entrance** are being reviewed.

Renovation in the **east-west corridor on the ground floor** will be completed by May 15.

Questions? Call **John Mazza** (FP&O).